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Second phase of 4th NID today

The second phase of the fourth National Immunisation Day will be held across the country today to give two drops of polio vaccine to the children under five, reports UNB.

About two crore children will be given Oral Polio Vaccine and a high Vitamin-A capsule through 1,20,000 vaccination centres throughout the country.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salauddin Yusuf formally inaugurated the second round of fourth NID at EPI bhaban in the city yesterday.

Addressing on the occasion, the minister called upon the people to bring their children under five years of age to the vaccination centres for administering OPV.

Police beat up passengers at Sylhet Airport

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 17: Police arrested three persons from Sylhet M A G Osmani Airport Lounge tonight on charge of ransacking and causing damage to Biman's property.

At least 10 people were injured as the police went into action on the agitating passengers who were protesting the cancellation of a scheduled Biman flight.

The district manager of Biman said, the Dhaka-bound flight BG 606 was scheduled to take off from Sylhet at 5.15 pm today. It was rescheduled thrice till 7.45 pm when the authorities had to cancel the flight due to the inclement weather and dense fog.

However, the 60 passengers and one Biman staff who were to fly on the flight were taken inside the lounge after check-in five pm.

After cancellation of the flight, the passengers, of whom 58 were London-bound and two bound for Dubai, became extremely agitated.

At one stage, some of them ransacked the Biman counter and some furniture. On getting information, a police team came and beat up some of the agitated passengers and their relatives.

A number of passengers alleged that, the Biman authorities misbehaved with the passengers who asked about the repeated change in the schedule of the flight.

Sharif

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In Dhaka, a delegation of a faction of Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee called on Finance Minister of Pakistan Sharjeel Aziz today, according to UNB.

The 10-member delegation was led by the faction leader Ejaz Ahmed Siddiqui.

During the meeting, the Pakistani minister said his government has appealed to all the countries of the world to provide funds for repatriation of its stranded nationals from Bangladesh as early as possible.

The delegation demanded subsistence allowances from Pakistan government for the stranded people now living in various camps till their repatriation.

They said the camp dwellers should be provided with Pakistani passport without any delay.

They also demanded financial support from Pakistan for the reconstruction of camps and repair of the educational institutions.

Nawaz Sharif cut short his visit and left Dhaka today for home by a special flight.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina saw him off at the Zia International Airport. Cabinet members, diplomats and high civil and military officials were present.

Nawaz Sharif was scheduled to go on a boat trip to the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, yesterday morning and fly to Pakistan in the afternoon.

An official source said "dense fog in the morning" forced the Pakistani premier to abandon his visit to the Sundarbans.

Wasim Akram

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to a source close to the Pakistan team.

It was also learnt that Akram and star batsman Salim Malik, who are distressed following allegations of match-fixing, may be heading for a premature end to their illustrious cricketing career unless they can come clean.

The source, however, confirmed that paceman Waqar Younis and wicketkeeper Moin Khan, who were also left out of the Independence Cup squad due to poor form, were almost certain to return to the 16-man South Africa-bound team which will be led by present captain Rashid Latif. Besides, Mohammad Wasim, Shaheen Akhtar and Shahid Nazir are likely to earn a recall.

Players from the 14-man team now playing in Dhaka who are likely to miss the South Africa tour are Manzoor Akhtar, Aaqib Javed and Shahid Afridi, confided the source.



Experts point out 3 main causes

35 pc city dwellers face water crisis

Water experts have observed that unplanned expansion of the capital city, increasing population and construction of high-rise buildings were the main causes of short supply of water to the city dwellers, reports UNB.

About 35 per cent city population is being deprived of water, either fully or partially, due to increasing shortage that has accumulated over the years, they told a workshop here yesterday.

Dhaka WASA organised the workshop on 'problems and prospects of water supply in Dhaka city' at the WASA Bhaban auditorium. LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman opened the workshop as chief guest.

WASA chairman Dr A T M Zillur Haq chaired the opening session. Some 70 local and foreign experts attended the workshop.

The experts said excessive lifting of underground water was causing gradual recession of the underground water-level, raising the water-lifting cost and deteriorating the quality of water.

In his inaugural speech, LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman expressed concern over the wastage of water, its pilferage and underhand dealings with water bills. He sought cooperation from all to stop such undesirable practices.

He said some dishonest people are depriving the government of its revenue earnings by taking illegal water-line connections and tampering with the bills.

Zillur called for taking steps to prevent water pollution and

to control the quality of both underground and surface water.

He said owners of different industries in the city and the government authorities should be more responsible and cautious to preserve environment and prevent pollution of underground and river waters.

The government will take steps to implement new projects with the assistance of donor countries and aid organisations to purify and supply of surface water by reducing pressure on the underground water, the LGRD minister told the workshop.

He said the government has taken up three big projects for water treatment. These included the Sayedabad water treatment project with a production capacity of 90 crore litres per day. It is now under implementation.

Other projects are: Postagola Water Treatment Project (daily capacity 22 crore litres) and Singair Water Treatment Project near Savar (daily capacity 45 crore litres).

Zillur said the Chandnighat water treatment plant in old Dhaka has already gone into operation with a production capacity of 4 crore litres per day.

With the implementation of the short, intermediate and long-term development projects undertaken by the Dhaka WASA, he said there will be no crisis, no deficit of water in the city.

At present, the minister said, Dhaka WASA is capable of producing 85 crore litres of water per day as against the demand of 130 crore litres.

Overriding of jurisdiction

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the ruling party did not include any BNP legislator while announcing 14 standing committees. The National Committee included names of two MPs of the BNP. But while constituting the body, the ruling party rather kept some positions vacant in all the 14 committees, clearly hinting that the vacancies are to be filled by the opposition MPs.

This time, Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdulla sought the 'desire' or 'consent' of the BNP MPs, while ignored the convention of sorting out the issue with his counterpart, the Opposition Chief Whip. The Treasury

benches eventually affects an Article of the Constitution that clearly states that no legislator can assert his/her individual position vis-a-vis the position of his/her parliamentary party, especially when it comes to voting on the floor of Parliament. Under the said Article, a member is destined to lose his/her seat in case s/he dares to ignore the party decision which usually come through the Chief Whips.

Without going for any value judgement of the Article here, it is necessary to note that all the parliamentary standing bodies need to get approval of the House through vote. It is, therefore, clear that the BNP legislators would eventually run the risk of losing their seats, if they respond to the Chief Whip's letter without permission from the Opposition Chief Whip.

Political experts believe that such attempts would no way produce any positive result for the ruling party, rather, it would widen the gap with the Opposition. And widening the gap between the Treasury and Opposition benches would eventually make sound parliamentary practice a far cry.

Sonia

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She said in her speech that upcoming elections would witness a clash of fundamental values, ideas and ideals."

The choice is between harmony and progress and the exploitation of our differences for the sake of power at any cost," she said.

"Can we negate our values and heritage by converting religion into an instrument to divide?" she asked.

Following the BNP reaction,

the government cannot reach, the NGOs try to reach out through their poverty alleviation schemes."

He further added, "In the beginning we supported the Gramene Bank, BRAC and Proshika, but now we are moving towards the smaller NGOs. We support the nursery of smaller NGOs rather than the large NGOs who have already proved their capacity. We are now assisting the local grassroots level NGOs to grow up."

He said the smaller NGOs could seek IFAD's involvement if they could demonstrate that they have the capacity to implement projects.

Asked if IFAD was doing enough in Bangladesh in the agricultural sector, Fawzi Hamad replied, "Our target is the people, not agriculture. Our

Clinton, Jones face-to-face

WASHINGTON, Jan 17: Bill Clinton and his sex-harassment accuser Paula Jones met face-to-face today as the President arrived at his lawyer's office to make a sworn deposition in the case, reports AFP.

Clinton arrived in his motorcade and entered the building through the parking entrance making no comment to reporters, moments after Jones walked through the front entrance.

The deposition is believed to be the first time a sitting president has been called to testify in a civil court proceeding.

In the deposition expected to last several hours, Clinton was expected to be asked about Jones' charges that he propositioned her at an Arkansas hotel in 1991, while he was governor of the state and she was a state employee.

"Paula Jones feels great, she is not nervous, she slept well last night," her adviser Susan Carpenter McMillan said. She said Jones would say a few words after the proceedings.

A trial date has been set for May 26 in Little Rock, Arkansas. Jones is claiming two million dollars in damages for sexual harassment suit and violation of her civil rights.

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